

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

3 August 2011

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Operational Services)/  
Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

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**S/0978/11 - COTON  
Replacement Dwelling - 75, The Footpath  
for Mr & Mrs Paul Bradbury**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 07 July 2011**

**This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for  
determination at the request of the Local Member**

### **Site and Proposal**

1. The application site is located within the designated Coton village framework, the boundary of which runs along the north boundary of the site and also to the southern side of The Footpath and the southern side of the access. The land beyond the framework is within the Cambridge Green Belt.
2. The application site is a large plot with a single access that runs parallel with that serving 77 The Footpath. The existing property is a two-storey property, with the first floor within the roof space. To the rear, the roof slopes down above an almost fully glazed ground floor elevation. Both of the neighbouring properties are currently taller than no. 77. There is no distinct architectural style in the area.
3. The full application, received on 12th May 2011, seeks the construction of a replacement dwelling on the site. This would be set slightly deeper into the plot, and would be a full two-storey dwelling with a single storey range to the side. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and a Daylight/Shadow Study.

### **Planning History**

4. An application to extend the existing dwelling at two-storey level to the front of the existing garage was approved through application **S/0306/09/F**. Works on this extant scheme have yet to take place.
5. There are other planning applications historically related to the site. However, no others are considered relevant to the determination of this application.

### **Policies**

6. **Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2007: ST/6** Group Villages.

7. **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD (LDF DCP)** adopted July 2007: **DP/1** Sustainable Development, **DP/2** Design of New Development, **DP/3** Development Criteria, **DP/4** Infrastructure and New Development, **DP/7** Development Frameworks, **GB/3** Mitigating the Impact of Development in the Green Belt, **HG/1** Housing Density, **NE/1** Energy Efficiency, **NE/6** Biodiversity, **NE/15** Noise Pollution & **TR/2** Car and Cycle Parking Standards.
8. **District Design Guide SPD** adopted March 2010.
9. **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions:** Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

### **Consultations**

10. **Coton Parish Council** recommends approval of the application. They wish potential builders to be aware of the hazards of building in the summer such as children playing by the recreation ground. The footpath and roads are narrow, so any damages to verges should be repaired.
11. The **Local Highways Authority** wish a Method Statement to be provided relating to the process of demolition and construction and any effects this may have on the adopted public highway, with reference to control of debris, mud and dust, pedestrian and vehicle movements and the control of contractors parking. They add temporary facilities shall be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during construction.
12. **Cllr Burkitt**, having visited the site, notes the existing property is of no architectural merit. The replacement is considered to be acceptable. He also notes there is no policy to reduce heights of dwellings at village edges, and that the symmetry is very pleasing. The proposal is considered a good statement at the start of the village, which would enhance the countryside and landscape character.

### **Representations**

13. The occupier of **73 The Footpath** notes concerns about the height of the proposal, which is taller than the other houses, and its potential to dominate the street scene. The use of soakaways for the disposal of surface water is also questioned.
14. The occupiers of **77 The Footpath** note the proposed dwelling would crowd out and restrict evening sunlight to their own property. The replacement dwelling would be taller and located closer to the shared boundary, and would restrict light to the south facing master bedroom window, and the two ground floor windows in the side facing elevation. The shadow study does not show evening light. The increase in width across the plot would also dominate the street scene.

## Planning Comments

15. The key considerations in the determination of this application are the principle of development, the impact on the street scene, and the impact upon the amenity of the occupiers of adjacent properties.

### *The Principle of Development*

16. Coton is classified as a Group Village in the LDF Core Strategy 2007, where residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum size of eight dwellings could be acceptable subject to site-specific concerns. There is a principle to support one-for-one replacements within village frameworks, subject to the density of development. There are no objections to the demolition of the existing dwelling, despite its unusual design.
17. The site has an area of approximately 0.26 hectares. Policy HG/1 of the LDF DCP 2007 seeks residential developments to make the best use of sites by achieving average net densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare unless there are local circumstances that require a different treatment. A single dwelling on the plot relates to development of 4 dwellings per hectare, significantly below that required. The applicant has not addressed the issue of density within their planning application.
18. Whilst it should be for the applicant to demonstrate, a single replacement dwelling on the plot is likely to be acceptable in this instance. This edge of village location is currently characterised by three large dwellings on three large plots. Backland development would be out of character and there are concerns about the location of more than one property across the frontage. The access is narrow and angled from the road, and given potential conflict with the adjoining access serving 77 The Footpath, there are likely to be highway concerns at this point.

### *Impact upon the Street Scene*

19. The existing property measures 6.3m to the roof ridge, and has a width of 16m across its plot. It has an unusual design where the eaves are set artificially high to the front although they fall for the garage element, and are low to the rear. The building is currently located almost in line with the two-storey element to the neighbouring property of 73 The Footpath, with no. 77 set deeper into its plot.
20. The replacement dwelling would be set slightly deeper into the plot, and there are no objections to this per se. However, the replacement dwelling has an eaves height of 6m, almost the same as the ridge of the existing dwelling. The proposed ridge level of the property is 8.7m in height, 2.4m taller than existing. The two-storey bulk of the property would measure 19.4m in width across the plot, with an additional single storey element measuring 2.6m across the frontage.
21. The proposed replacement dwelling is therefore significantly larger than the dwelling it would replace. The plan does show the neighbouring properties to measure 7m in height. However, the applicant has confirmed that no. 73 The Footpath is 7.8m in height and they query whether no. 77 is taller too. However, the proposed dwelling would remain almost 1m taller than the

neighbouring properties, and significantly wider at this taller height. Given the scale and bulk of the property, it would dominate the street scene in this edge of village location and be out of character with the dwellings in the immediate vicinity.

22. There are also concerns regarding the design of the front elevation. The proposal shows a sandstone plinth at the front, creating a very small balcony accessed from the gallery. This feature is very urban and would sit out of context in this location. Also, the front elevation has 18 openings in its front elevation, with a number of rooms served by more than one window. The use of full-length openings or casements again creates a significantly urban appearance in the front elevation, to the detriment of the character of the village.

*Impact upon the Amenity of the Occupiers of Adjacent Properties*

23. The dwelling would be relocated slightly deeper into the plot than the existing dwelling. This would locate the dwelling beyond no. 73 The Footpath to the west. This property has a single storey range close to the boundary, with two openings and a glazed door serving this element. There are no facing windows at first floor level in the side elevation. The proposal would move the dwelling away from these windows and their outlook would be improved.
24. No. 73 The Footpath does have a number of rear facing ground floor and first floor windows from which some views of the new dwelling would be likely. However, no serious harm would result from the outlook of these windows. The dwelling would be more visible from the rear garden of no. 73, and would be only 4m from the shared boundary. The dwelling would therefore have a greater impact upon users of the rear garden. However, this is still considered to be an acceptable relationship. Moving the dwelling any further back is likely to be unacceptable due to the increased overbearing impact. If the scheme is approved, a condition would be required to ensure that no windows are located in the west side elevation at first floor level or above.
25. No. 77 The Footpath is set deeper into its plot. It is a two-storey dwelling with a two-storey range located forward of the main dwelling. This has a window in the southern elevation and the concerns from the occupiers of this dwelling regarding the location of the proposed dwelling are noted. The two-storey bulk of the proposed dwelling would be approximately 3.9m from the shared boundary, and has been designed with a hip that would shift some of the bulk from the boundary. Unfortunately the Daylight/Shadow Study submitted does not show information beyond 3pm where the proposed dwelling would start to create shadowing to this window. The loss of some light from this window is inevitable given the relationship between the units. However, it is not considered to be serious enough to warrant a refusal in this instance.
26. No. 77 also has ground floor windows in its west elevation. These are already overshadowed by the vegetation close to the shared boundary. The single storey range to the replacement dwelling would be located 1.8m from the boundary, and would measure 2.8m and 3.5m to the eaves and ridge respectively. Given this relationship, no significant increase in loss of light would result to the ground floor windows. The proposal is therefore not considered to seriously harm the amenity of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties.

### *Other Matters*

27. The existing property is a four-bedroom dwelling. As a result, there is no requirement for contributions towards open space provision and community facilities infrastructure.
28. Comments regarding surface water drainage are noted. It is believed the existing property uses soakaways, and the new dwelling would do the same. Although the dwelling has a larger footprint, soakaways are likely to be adequate. However they may need to be increased in size through the Building Regulation process.
29. Comments from the Local Highways Authority regarding the need for a Method Statement are noted. A condition can be added to any consent. Comments from the Parish Council are also noted and an informative regarding damages to the verge could be added to any consent.

### **Recommendation**

30. Refuse for the following reason

The proposed replacement dwelling is 2.4m taller to the roof ridge than that it would replace, and would have an additional 3.2m of two-storey bulk across the frontage of the plot. The replacement dwelling would therefore be significantly larger than that it would replace, and would be significantly taller and wider than the neighbouring properties. Also, the front elevation proposes a sandstone plinth and 18 full-length openings in the two-storey element. These features are very urban in nature and draw the eye from the public views of the site. Such features are inappropriate given the location of the site. The dwelling would therefore dominate the street scene when viewed from the Footpath and the Recreation Ground to the south, and subsequently would be out of character in this edge of village location.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DP/2 of the Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (LDF DCP) 2007 which states all new development must be of high quality design and as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, should preserve or enhance the character of the local area; and Policy DP/3 of the LDF DCP 2007 which states planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact on village character.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- **Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2007.**
- **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.**
- **District Design Guide SPD** adopted March 2010.
- **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions.**
- **Planning File Ref: S/0978/11 and S/0306/09/F.**

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